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CONFLICTING VIEWS OF HISTORY.

'HISTORIES,' says Bacon, 'make men wise;' and by 'wise' he probably meant sound in judgment, comprehensive in view, prudent in the ordering of one's own life. The famous saying of Archbishop Usher is to the same effect: not to know the past is always to be a child. 'History,' says Dryden also, 'is the most pleasant school of wisdom.' These judgments probably record the general opinion of the educational value of history; yet from this opinion there have always been eminent dissentients. Locke, and in our own day Mr Herbert Spencer, are far from having such a high opinion of the value of history, and assign it but a low place in their scheme of studies. At first sight it seems strange that difference of opinion should be possible on such a subject. It is from the experience of his own past that the individual learns the wisdom wherewith to direct his steps; and it seems a natural conclusion that the race as a whole should learn its lesson on the same terms. The artist, whatever be his originality, can but order in different relations materials already in his hands. So in the most revolutionary of social or political movements, the past is in reality directing and controlling all. For every deed of the French Revolution, a precedent can be quoted. If the past, therefore, be thus everywhere and always present, can there be a better school of wisdom than the records which will faithfully represent to us the actors and doings in that past, at once the parent and the schoolmaster of the present? Put in this simple fashion, the question admits but of one answer. Locke and Bacon would certainly not have disagreed thus far.

Unfortunately, however, the question does not admit of such a simple solution. Since history began to be written, men have been unable to agree as to what it is in the past that best supplies the lessons we seek. They have even differed as to the best methods of presenting that lesson when it has been found. The matter and the manner of history, therefore, are alike matters of

dispute. As history is thus at a singular disadvantage with certain other departments of human knowledge, we can scarcely be surprised that there should exist some difference of opinion with regard to its comparative educational value. A few remarks on the different conceptions of history that have prevailed even during the last two centuries will suffice to show that this is a subject on which unanimity need never be looked for.

Dryden was the contemporary of Locke; and as he was the greatest man of letters of his day, his views of history may be regarded as the most enlightened then possible. In an interesting fragment accompanying a life of Plutarch he has spoken at length of what he considers to be the proper domain and function of the historian. He distinguishes three departments of history—biography, annals, and history proper. The subject-matter of annals and history proper is identical: they differ only in their mode of presenting it. The historian proper must aim at a certain 'dignity and gravity of style,' and he is at liberty to indulge in legitimate guesses at the probable causes of events—always, however, on the condition that he sees to it that he is free from all prejudice and superstition. He must also be careful to pass by all 'matters of trivial moment as debasing the majesty of his work.' Here we have Dryden's conception of what is the true domain of history. Nothing must come within its province that involves a break in the majestic march of the historian's style. In other words, the *form* of the history is of graver importance than the *matter*. It gives us also a curious idea of the uncritical way of thinking about history in Dryden's day, when he tells us that the one British historian of the first rank is the Scotsman, George Buchanan. On the real value of Buchanan's *History of Scotland* it is sufficient to quote the late Mr Hill Burton, who was disposed to speak well of his celebrated countryman. 'Buchanan's History,' he says, 'is of no more use and value than as a bulky exercise in the composition of classical Latin.' As at least the first half of Buchanan's *History* is pure fable, this

judgment can scarcely be considered too severe. When we have a man like Dryden, therefore, with such ideas about history, we need hardly wonder that his contemporary Locke should think lightly of its educational value.

Voltaire was among the first to introduce a more rational conception of the true nature of history. He treats with contempt the two types of the historian of his own day—those who thought they did the world a service in publishing the petty gossip of courts; and those, equally foolish, who thought that history is but the detail of treaties and battles. In a few pregnant sentences in a passage published in 1744, he sketches what he thinks is the true field of history. To be instructive, he says, history should account to us for the growth or decrease of population in different countries; it should explain why one nation comes to be strong on land, and another on the sea; it should relate the introduction of the arts, commerce, and manufactures among different peoples; it should point out the radical vice and the dominant virtue of each nationality; and above all it should have for its grand subject the changes in the laws, customs, and character of men. The great histories of Hume, Robertson, and Gibbon in large degree realised Voltaire's ideal, and it may be admitted that in many respects they are to this day unsurpassed. Yet even they are by no means free from the conventional notion of the so-called 'dignity of history.' Dazzling panoramic effect is their predominating aim, and not the single-minded desire to see and to expound the drift and scope of the great societies of men.

It is only in our own age that Voltaire's conceptions have been worked out with fidelity and adequate intelligence. Yet at no previous time have so many conflicting notions prevailed regarding the true scope and aim of history. Our historians cannot even agree as to what history proper really is. One eminent historian tells us that history properly understood is essentially the history of the *state*. We may have histories of art, of science, of literature, of manufactures; but the historian proper has no concern with these things. In treating of these he is poaching on another's manor, dissipating his own energies, weakening his own work. Each of these subjects should have its own special historian, who is yet no historian in the true sense of the word. On the other hand, we have another school who hold that the domain of the historian is co-extensive with the life of a people, that it has for its legitimate theme not only the work of statesmen, but of authors, of artists, of traders, and of handicraftsmen. For those who read and do not write history the dispute does not seem one of grave importance.

But this dispute is only one of many. Is it the primary aim of the historian to interest or to instruct? The difference of opinion here has arisen mainly in connection with Macaulay's

famous History. On the one hand it is maintained that the type of mind required to produce a work like that of Macaulay is essentially unhistorical. Its tendency is to search only for facts that will tell, and to relate them in a manner that indisposes the mind of the readers to receive the true lessons of history. Such a mind as Macaulay's, it is said, finds its true sphere not in history but in historical romance. With the best intentions in the world, a Macaulay unconsciously warps facts, and groups them in a manner that the scientific historian has but the invidious task of undoing. If it be said that Macaulay at least ensures readers, it is replied that this but makes matters worse. These readers have only had bad mental habits aggravated, and have but learned lessons which they will have daily to unlearn. Writers who reason thus maintain that the paramount duty of the historian is to eschew this desire to interest his readers. The author of a scientific treatise thinks only of how he may most simply and accurately state his facts and prove his conclusions; and in no respect is the aim of the true historian different from this.

It is evident that the question here in dispute is one that cannot be summarily settled. The writers of both schools agree in saying that truth is to be set before every other consideration; and they each maintain that their own method is that best fitted to elicit and to present it. When the question is closely considered, it seems to resolve itself into this—Is emotion or the absence of it more likely to mislead a writer? It is clear that no categorical answer to this question is possible. If emotion tends to obscure perception, the want of emotion is as likely to blunt it. Every event and every person connected with the French Revolution may be analysed with perfect precision and dispassionateness, but should we then be in a position to realise that demoniac burst of human passion? If we are to have the whole truth, imaginative presentment must have its place as well as scientific analysis, and Carlyle must at least supplement Mignet.

Another point keenly discussed at present by writers of history, and one of far greater importance than any of those already touched on, is the function of great men in the development of society. Carlyle's extreme views on this subject never perhaps found many supporters. That the bulk of mankind are but so many ciphers, and great men the figures that give them significance, is a conception pardonable only as a distortion of a great truth. Before Carlyle's day there was indeed no tendency to minimise the importance of great men. Hume, Robertson, and even Gibbon put their best work into their accounts of the great characters that came in their way. It would seem, however, that Carlyle's extreme views have brought about something like a reaction. The tendency at present is to dwarf the figures which have long seemed to tower above their contemporaries. In the latest History of the reign of Charles I. we have a signal example of this tendency. One of the great

traditional figures of English history is John Hampden, whose personality Macaulay has made familiar to every English reader. In the History of which we speak, Hampden is a dim figure in the background, who plays the pettiest part in the great struggle of his time. If common-sense revolt somewhat at Carlyle's conception, no more is it reconciled with this later view. Every age has its own great men, and we see for ourselves how in our own day one or two great men seem to absorb into themselves the life of a people. And if this is so in our own day, we may conceive that in greater or less degree it has ever been the same.

There is finally the great question whether a 'philosophy of history' is possible. As from a given arc we can determine the complete circle, may we from the facts of the past foreshadow what must be the course of the future? The question will probably occupy men's minds to the end of time; but meanwhile, according as he answers it must the historian be unconsciously biassed in his treatment of the past. If he believe that a philosophy of history is possible, he will inevitably manipulate his facts to suit his theory.

From all these conflicting views, we gather that history can never present us with a definite and perfectly coherent body of knowledge such as we have in the sciences. Yet it must surely be a wise instinct that has led every people to make the deeds of their fathers the first and chief study of youth. A fact of science and a fact of history differ fundamentally in this—that the former permits of only one construction, the latter of a thousand. It is by reason of this very peculiarity that the facts of history have a supreme value of their own in developing men's character and intelligence.

JOHN VALE'S GUARDIAN.

CHAPTER XI.

In the early morning, Madame Vigne crept quietly into the room where the two wanderers lay, and looked at them with an air which was motherly and almost proprietorial. They were both sound asleep, and they certainly looked innocent enough to awaken all the good creature's womanly sympathies. John, with his fair hair tumbled about his forehead and his cheeks a little flushed with sleep, lay with outcast arms and upturned face, breathing softly and regularly. His skin was of exquisite fairness, and he pleased Madame's eye more than the swarthy and bulldog William, who even in his sleep wore a look of resolution, and lay curled up doggedly with his face half-buried in the pillow, as if he slept with a purpose, and were determined to have full value for his time.

Madame Vigne herself was of a swart complexion. Madame Vigne was of Marseilles, and came of swart people, and had lived most of her life amidst a swart population. So John's delightful English fairness made him charming to her; and when she had stood looking at him for a time, she went round to his side of the bed, and sitting down there, caressed his hair with her dark plump hand, and smoothed it with great gentleness so as not to awake him.

'You will take care of yourself wherever you go,' she said to herself, nodding her curly head at Will, and silently apostrophising him. 'But this poor innocent!'

The little Hector of whom she had spoken last night had had raven hair and lustrous black eyes and cheeks like a berry; but she found a likeness to him in John, somehow, as women will, and took a tender fancy to the boy, which was all the more pronounced because of her memory of his helpless looks of the night before.

When she had looked her fill, Madame stole softly from the room and, closing the door behind her with great caution, went silently down-stairs. There, aided by a rosy-checked damsel of thirteen or so, who answered to the name of Sa'anne—a Frenchified mutilation of Sarah Anne—she busied herself in household preparations until a moon-faced kitchen clock which struck the quarters announced half-past seven. At that she slid up-stairs again and knocked softly at three separate doors. M. Vigne answered grumpily from behind the first; the little foreigner responded chirpily from behind the second; and from behind the third, which was situated in the garret, no answer came at all. Madame opened the door and whispered: 'Mr Orme! Mr Orme!'

A voice which sounded as if it were obscured by bedclothes, answered 'Hillo!' and a snore followed so close upon the exclamation that it was evident that the speaker had gone to sleep again at once.

'Mr Orme!' repeated Madame in a sibilant whisper, 'if you do not answer at once, I vow there will be no breakfast for you.'

'What's the matter?' asked the inmate of the chamber in a voice at once unctuous and husky.

'It is time to get up,' responded Madame. 'Dress very silently; there are two children asleep below you, and I do not wish them to be wakened.'

Mr Orme, with a yawn which sounded midway between a moan of anguish and a groan of indignation, stirred in bed, and leaning over, artfully paddled with his hand upon the floor to impress his landlady with the belief that he had arisen.

'I know better than that,' said Madame, holding the door slightly ajar. 'Come and tap; I shall not believe you until you do.'

The invisible Mr Orme yawned again, and this time the note was all submissive. A moment later, a shuffling footstep crossed the room, and a set of tremulous knuckles rapped at the inside of the door.

'Be very careful,' Madame whispered, 'and make no noise.'

A yawn like the growl of a caged bear, with the words 'All right' somehow muffled in it, responded to this injunction; and Madame, stealing down-stairs again, peeped in passing into the room in which the young wayfarers lay, and finding them both still sound asleep, continued her downward course. A quarter of an hour later, M. Vigne, the little foreigner, and Madame were seated at breakfast; and when they were half-way through the meal, Mr Orme appeared. Mr Orme had so balloon-like a figure, and his arms and legs were so stiffly attached to it, that he had an air of being inflated, and could hardly have surprised anybody much if at any given moment he had floated upward and bobbed his bald head

against the ceiling. There was a contradictory sloth and weight in all his movements, and his face expressed a contradiction equally pronounced. Whether he were originally made to express the bitterest discontent with things in general, and had been persuaded after trial to accept his troubles comically; or whether he had been intended for a spirit of mirth, who had found his humour crushed by adverse circumstances, his face bore such a blending of humorous opposites that it would have been impossible to say. At one time the corners of his mouth would take an almost tearful downward curve, whilst his moist eye trembled, and his eyebrows twitched with what looked like hidden laughter; and at another the moist eye would express the profoundest melancholy, whilst the other features of his too rubicund visage seemed to be struggling with a hidden smile. His nose seemed to be on fire and to lend an actual radiance to the chamber; but the rest of his face was wofully pale in comparison; and these signs, coupled with the tremulous motion of his hands, seemed to indicate a fairly confirmed habit of intemperance.

'One can see where you're going, Mr Orme,' said the lady of the house severely. 'It is no fault of mine if your coffee is cold; and I suppose it is useless to offer you anything to eat.'

Mr Orme's pale baldness was sparsely interrupted by tufts of disreputable gray hair of that peculiar tone which seems never to belong to respectable or successful people. He put up his shaky hands and clutched a few of the tufts on being thus addressed, and groaned softly to himself.

'You will get no pity,' said Madame. 'Take your coffee and go to your work.'

He helped himself to milk and sugar with an air at once surreptitious and apologetic and drank in silence.

'The children, my dear Mathilde?' said M. Vigne, speaking in his native language. 'Have you thought of anything? Have you decided upon anything?'

'You know, Jean,' Madame Vigne responded, 'that I shall not dream of deciding upon anything until I have consulted you.'—M. Vigne nodded solemnly in assent to this statement.—'I ask myself first,' pursued Madame, 'what is my Christian duty. Perhaps they are young marauders.' She looked hard at her husband; and M. Vigne looked searchingly at her. When he had decided that he was expected to shake his head at this, he shook it vehemently. 'I knew,' she said triumphantly, 'that you would not think so. Perhaps they have been driven from a harsh home by abominable cruelty.'

'It is very probable,' said M. Vigne.

'I think so too,' Madame responded; 'but I will question them this morning and find out what I can about them.'

'That,' returned Monsieur, 'is what I should have desired.'

'Evidently,' said Madame, 'or I should have asked you first.'

Mr Orme, during this brief colloquy, except that he had groaned softly to himself at measured intervals, like a human timepiece constructed to compute the moments in that dismal fashion, had kept silence, turning his moist eye upon Madame

when she spoke, and upon her husband when he answered.

'Who are the children, Madame?' he asked in English. 'This is the second time I've heard of 'em.'

'I do not know who they are,' Madame answered. 'They were brought here last night by M. Jousseran, who met them in the street. They have come on foot from somewhere'—waving her fat hands hither and thither, as if to indicate complete incertitude as to the direction from which the wayfarers had arrived. 'They are respectable; they are dressed like little gentlemen. One of them is marked from head to foot—do you hear me?' (with a tragic wrath before which Mr Orme shrank and covered)—'is marked from head to foot with cruel blows.'

'I daresay,' said Mr Orme, 'that somebody has beaten him.'

Madame hailed his inspiration with a glance of so much scorn that Mr Orme withdrew into himself and avoided her eye whilst he sipped the remnant of his coffee.

'It is time we went,' said M. Vigne, rising and addressing his compatriot.

'Do you hear that?' said Madame, turning upon her English lodger. 'You understand French fast enough when it is not your business. You are an omnibus to go to work, and an express to leave it.'

Mr Orme gathered himself shakily together and arose. 'I was only waiting, ma'am,' he said, standing before her, with his elbows glued to his sides, and his hands waving feebly like the flippers of a seal—'I was only waiting, ma'am, to indicate that in case either of the young gentlemen should be in want of employment, and should be qualified to undertake the very simple functions'—

'You will be late,' said Madame, cutting him short. 'In point of fact you are late already.'

Mr Orme said no more, but after one or two false starts, pattered aimlessly to the door, sighted a dingy silk hat upon a hook in the hall, pattered towards that, and after an interval for reflection, took it from the hook and put it on. Then he pattered towards the door with a curious air of going there by accident, and slipped furtively into the street.

Madame paid two or three visits to her protégés before they awoke, but at length found them half dressed. She kissed them both in a business-like way, and stood by to superintend their toilet, as she had done on the previous evening, retiring for a moment to bring up their shoes, which had been cleaned and polished with great fineness by the hands of Sarah Anne. When they were fully dressed, she ushered them down-stairs, and the little domestic appeared with a second edition of breakfast: a pot of coffee, by no means too strong, for Madame Vigne's purse was narrower than her instincts of hospitality, a great bowl of milk, a big loaf, and a small pat of butter. Both the boys had healthy appetites, and in spite of their hearty meal of the night before, they attacked these simple provisions with a gusto at which Madame looked on well pleased.

'And now,' said Madame, when Sarah Anne had cleared away, 'I must have a talk with you little men. What do you little men mean to do?'

'We mean to go to London, ma'am,' said Will.

'And what do you mean to do when you have got to London?'

'I shall find something to do there, if you please, ma'am.'

'Perhaps you may, perhaps you may not,' Madame responded. 'London is a big place, my child, and all big places are cruel.—Do you know anybody in London?'

'No, ma'am,' said Will. The question cast him down more than a little, and his face showed it. 'We don't know anybody in London.'

'Well now, tell me,' said Madame, drawing her seat nearer, and laying a kindly hand upon John's light head while she questioned his companion, 'why did you run away from home?'

There was something so very motherly in Madame's kindly face, something in the gesture with which she caressed John's curls, something even in the cushioning proportions of her overgrown figure, which invited confidence. Will began to explain, and she to question, and in a little while the whole story became tolerably clear. Madame looked more and more troubled, though none the less affectionate and kindly, as the tale went on.

'I do not know what I am to do,' she said perplexedly. 'It is not possible to find it in the heart to send you back again, and it is not possible to find it in the heart to let two babes wander all over the world alone. You must stay here until dinner-time, and then my husband shall decide about you.'

The boys were none too eager for a renewal of their march, for the first day's walk had left them sore-footed and stiff-limbed. Even Will was contented with an hour or two's respite from the road, and by-and-by John was perfectly happy and absorbed.

'Stay here,' said Madame; 'I will find you something to do.'

She bustled away, and in a little while returned with two frames, in either of which a clean unmarked sheet of drawing-paper was tightly strained over a sheet of glass. These frames being set in the window, a design in outline strained at the back of the glass came clearly into view. Madame produced two needles set in cork, and instructed the boys to prick upon the clean paper over the outlines indicated below.

'Now,' said Madame, 'anybody who chooses to be careful can do this work very nicely; and anybody who chooses to be careless can spoil the paper by pricking in the wrong places. That I am sure you are too kind to do, for the paper is cartridge paper, and every sheet costs threepence.—Look! Let me show you to begin with.' And Madame, taking one of the cork-set needles, pricked over the edge of a leaf in the left-hand top corner of one of the frames. John watched with great interest, and when she turned smilingly towards him, asking if he thought he could do that, he reached out his hand eagerly for the home-made stylus and set to work at once with great care and diligence. When he had pricked out the stalk on which the leaf depended, he turned round to Madame for approval.

'That will do excellently,' she said, clapping her fat hands together in applause.—'And now let me see what you can do.'

Will also received his lesson, and set to work; and Madame having watched for a minute or two went away to her household concerns. She sailed in at intervals to see how the work progressed, and was lavish in enthusiastic compliment, so that both the boys were contented with their labour and felt in a very little time quite accustomed to it. It was a simple and easy task, and to John's blunt mind it seemed even delightful. There was a bird upon the bough he had been set to trace, hovering with outspread wings above a nest from which were thrust half-a-dozen callow heads and open bills. This enticed him so strongly that he must needs desert the other parts of the design for it, and he worked away with bright eyes and eager face and parted lips until he had followed every line of it actually. Then he let off an exultant crow, and turned so vivid a look upon his companion that Will was quite amazed at him.

'Why, Jack,' he said, 'you're like what you used to be.'

'Am I?' said Jack, without paying much heed to the exclamation.—'Look at it! Ain't it jolly? Wouldn't you think she was just flying? I say, how the chaps that do this must watch the birds. It isn't like drawing from a copy, because they won't keep still a second. She wouldn't be like that longer than it would take to clap your hands together.'

'Yes,' said Will, 'it's jolly pretty.' Then, after a lengthy pause: 'Do you think this is work, Jack?'

'I don't know,' Jack answered. 'It's jolly easy, if it is, and jolly nice as well.'

There was no trace upon him of the settled dullness into which he had fallen for months past, and he went back to his labour with the warmth and light of this new enthusiasm still upon him. But in a little while he tired among the intricacies of branch and leaf, and leaning his head on Will's shoulder, fell to watching him dreamily whilst he pricked away with a dogged and careful persistence thoroughly characteristic of him. With occasional renewals of enthusiasm on John's part, and slow, conscientious persistence on Will's side, the work lasted the morning through; and Madame professed herself delighted by their skill and industry when she came in to lay the cloth for dinner. There was such a community established between John and Madame in this brief space of time that he took her by the hand, and dragged her to the window to exult in his work with as little shyness as if he had known her for a year. Whilst she bent with clasped hands before it with ejaculations of simulated delight, John put his arm round her fat waist, and rubbed his head against her shoulder; and at these signs of confidence and affection she fled precipitately to the kitchen, where she threw her apron over her face and rocked herself to and fro for a minute, surrendering herself to memories of the little Hector. From these tender reminiscences she emerged instantly into a condition of beaming good-fellowship, and went to and fro in her preparations with such a swirl of petticoats that the house seemed full of her. Mr Orme looked like a balloon and travelled like a sloth. Madame in repose looked immovably weighty, and waltzed hither and thither when she gave her mind to

motion as if she were built in sylph-like lines and texture.

A few minutes after the hour of one, Vigne and Jousseran came in together, and shortly afterwards, Mr Orme presented himself. He brought with him a faint odour of rum, and was less depressed than he had been earlier in the day. Madame with much vivacity displayed the work of the morning and called upon everybody to praise it. It seemed that the whole household took its cue from her in most things, and a little more enthusiasm and admiration were expressed than perhaps the boys' labours actually called for. When due tribute had been paid, she whisked away, and returned with a tureen in which steamed the contents of a capacious *pot-au-feu*. The liquid, which was rich in floating shreds of vegetables and in pepper, was served first; and the solids of the dish, which were not quite so plentiful, came afterwards. Eked out by the great lanches of bread which Madame carved, there was enough for all; and when the meal was over, the four elders sipped a rather feeble black coffee, whilst the two Frenchmen smoked cigarettes, and Mr Orme puffed solemnly at a short well-blackened clay pipe.

'I was about to observe this morning, Madame,' said Mr Orme, gently caressing that incandescent nose of his, as if he warmed his fingers at it—'I was about to observe this morning, ma'am, when you reminded me that it was time to go, that there is an opening at the office for a youth. I do not know what your views in respect to these young gentlemen may be, but for an industrious and respectable youth there is an opening—an opening, Madame.' He described the opening with his trembling hands, as if it were something circular.

'I do not know,' said Madame, frowning thoughtfully, 'what M. Vigne will decide upon.'

M. Vigne had only spent twenty years of his life in England, and since he had resolved from the first that it was the business of people who desired to converse with a Frenchman to be acquainted with the only language worth speaking in the world, he had very easily contrived to remain in complete ignorance of the insular tongue.

'Jean,' said his wife, addressing him, 'it is very hard to know what to do. I know the whole story of these poor little beings now, and it would be shameful and impossible to send them back again.'—M. Vigne nodded in his stately and assenting way.—'M. Orme tells me there is a place vacant at the printing-office. They want a boy there. Do you think the dark one could go, and the light one stay here, and make patterns? They would earn their bread. We may know better what to do with them in a little while, and the fair boy is so good, so gentle, so docile. He reminds me of our'—There Madame choked a little, and the too ready tears of sympathy made her black southern eyes twinkle with sudden moisture.

'My dear,' replied M. Vigne, 'you have your health only to consider. It will put extra work upon you, and I sometimes think that you have too much already.'

Madame set her thumb nail behind her glistening white teeth and snapped it triumphantly.

'That for my health!' she said. 'I thought that you would agree with me.'

'My dear,' said M. Vigne, with stately gravity, 'you are invariably right.'

THE 'LADY BRASSEY' MUSEUM.

ALL admirers of the late Lady Brassey's books and marvellous collection of natural-history objects will be interested to hear of the Museum, which has just been arranged as a lasting tribute to her memory by her husband at his residence in Park Lane. The collection is one of varied scope and attraction, and is enhanced by the delightful manner in which it has been arranged. The entrance to the Museum is from the Durbar Room, which visitors will recollect having seen at the Indian and Colonial Exhibition; the room is much the same as we then saw it, with the exception of the windows, which are new and specially designed, and the door from Seherampore. Ascending the staircase, we come upon curiosities from all parts of the world, some of intrinsic value; whilst others are of interest for the associations and histories attached to them. Many of them have been gathered from countries seldom visited; and others—for instance, the beautiful sponges and corals—need depend upon nothing but their intrinsic beauty to make them specially attractive. Among the sponges are many species of such marvellous and diverse shapes as may well cause astonishment to those who are only acquainted with the common domestic variety. The corals, true products of Nature, bring vividly to the mind the incomprehensible greatness of mother Nature; lovely as they are when dead, it is only, as Lady Brassey points out in her book *Tahiti*, when they are full of life, and the myriads of polyp stars are in united action, exhibiting a perfect blaze of colour, red, purple, and emerald green, in their varied tints, that their splendour can be appreciated. The group of beautiful delicate lace-like sponge corals popularly known as 'Venus' Flower Basket,' is one of the finest specimens ever exhibited. The Museum is ingeniously lit by electric light, the light being placed behind different coloured shells, and this in the sponge and coral cases has a charming effect.

Next in point of interest to the sponges and corals comes the collection of antiquities from the island of Cyprus, the result of some excavations made specially for Lady Brassey in 1884. The objects collected include some three hundred and twenty pieces of pottery, comprising vases of various kinds, lamps, and figures or fragments of figures. The excavations were for the most part from one tumulus or collection of tombs in the neighbourhood of Kurnim; and the objects range in antiquity from the Archaic, Phœnician, and Greek periods down to the occupation by the Romans, and possibly even past the commencement of the Christian era. Besides the specimens of pottery and glass, there are earrings, pendants, fragments of funeral wreaths, and small objects in gold. Here we see, too, a thin gold leaf which appears to have covered the face of the dead like a veil. There are one or two fine examples of Phœnician glass, made probably at Tyre by Phœnician workmen. In these the prevailing colour is deep blue with wavy lines of colours; this is

best seen in a small amphora-shaped vessel, the body of which is so decomposed into granular particles that it can scarcely be handled without detaching portions. The elegant handles have been less affected, and appear to be of a dark orange colour. The greater portion of these pieces of ancient glass are remarkable for the iridescence they display, produced by the lapse of time; even a vase of pottery has become iridescent from having lain so long under ground. There is a wonderful play of colour on the glass viewed in different lights. In connection with these antiquities there are some from Central America displayed, comprising some ninety examples of gold ornaments and implements from the tombs of the ancient Indian inhabitants of the provinces of Antioquia, Cauca, Boyacá, and the republic of the United States of Colombia. This collection of itself is worth two thousand pounds.

The wonderful assortment of curios in the Borneo case forms a regular armoury with its display of *sunjutans*, gleaming creases, and other death-dealing weapons. A *sunjutun* is a weapon used by the head-hunter, being in the nature of a blowpipe, carrying within it a poisoned arrow, the arrow being made of the sago-palm. The creases vary. The ordinary *parang-latok*, which is carried by every man and nearly every woman, is a blade of steel nearly half an inch thick, of considerable sharpness, the sides being sometimes carved with engraved patterns, and adorned with trophies of human hair. In addition to these murderous relics, there are bracelets, anklets, tobacco boxes and pipes, betel-chewing instruments, raw gutta-percha, alligators' eggs, edible birds' nests, from India, Ceylon, Burma, Borneo, Japan, and the Straits Settlement. These treasures were brought home from the last voyage of the *Sunbeam*. Other curiosities are seen in the sun-baked pottery of the Orkney Islands, the quiver stone from the East Indies, flexible as india-rubber; the honeycombed ore showing chlorites from Australia, black granite from the hillside between Wairoa and the end of Lake Tarawera, which is now all changed since the volcanic eruption; a 'Zizyphus' or *Spina Christi* (crown of thorns) from the plains of Jericho; souvenirs of the Commune from *Père-la-Chaise*; fragments of the painted glass windows of the House of Commons damaged by the dynamite explosion in 1885; model of a sandstone ship from Burma, which floats, &c. The wonderful feather-cloak of scarlet and yellow *oo* and *mamo* feathers from the Sandwich Islands is exhibited. The cloak is made of one thousand feathers, taken singly and fastened into a sort of network of string. The yellow feathers are found only on these islands, and are always difficult to procure, because the use of them is a prerogative of royalty and nobility. There are only a few of these specimens of cloaks known of, one being in the British Museum, brought over by Captain Cook. From the Aleutian Isles comes a curious dress made of sea-birds' skins, beaten together. Some of the draperies on the wall are worthy of mention, noticeably those of Tappa from the various islands in the South Pacific. Tappa is the bark or pith of the paper mulberry. Its use is, or was, universal in the South Sea islands for mats and clothing, and it is made of many qualities. In

manufacturing it, the narrow strips of pith are laid lengthways and crossways alternately, so as to interlace each other, on a long narrow table, wetted profusely with water, and then hammered together with mallets.

There are ornaments and implements from nearly every uncivilised race in the world, besides choice specimens of European jewelry from Turkey, Bulgaria, and Albania. The Museum includes the original drawings by Mr Pritchett for the illustration of *In the Tropics*, *Trales*, and *Roaring Forties*; and a collection of photographs contained in about eighty folio volumes, besides Lady Brassey's original manuscripts. Lord Brassey is anxious the working-classes should reap the benefit of his varied treasures, and for this purpose the Museum will be thrown open for them to visit. There will be lectures explanatory of the curiosities, which will naturally add to the interest of those viewing them. Some idea of the graceful tribute to Lady Brassey's memory may be gathered from the foregoing description of this rare and instructive collection of natural and ethnological objects. These are a delight to both the naturalist and the artist; while even to the uninitiated the contemplation of such beautiful objects cannot fail to elevate the thoughts, stimulate the intellect, and raise the mind to a sense of the many glorious objects in the lower forms of life, such as are exhibited to the wondering gaze of those anxious to obtain a glimpse of the marvels of the deep, as well as of the curiosities of all times and climes.

ASTBURY'S BARGAIN.

A STORY IN SIX CHAPTERS.

CHAPTER II.—DAISY.

THE latest editions of the evening papers contained a brief paragraph under big headlines: 'GREAT FRAUDS IN THE CITY!'—'FLIGHT OF THE SUSPECTED CRIMINAL!'—and so forth. The information given under these startling lines was somewhat meagre. Messrs Ellicott & Co., the well-known ship-owners and ship-brokers of Fenchurch Street, had recently discovered that a series of ingenious forgeries had been perpetrated by some one in their employment. The sums obtained by these forgeries, so far as could be at present estimated, amounted to the enormous total of ninety thousand pounds. A rigid investigation into the affair was in progress, and in the meanwhile it was discovered that the confidential clerk of the firm, named Gilbert Astbury, had absconded. He had been aware for several days that he was under suspicion, and his sudden flight seemed to justify it. The police were on his track, and no doubt of his speedy arrest was entertained.

The news of Gilbert's disappearance was the cause of much excitement to the inmates of Cedar Cottage; but the views taken of it by each of the three women differed. Hetty regarded it as an unquestionable proof of the innocence of Henry Dacon; and whilst she lamented the position of his and her former friend, she was glad that her lover was thus exonerated from all possibility of

doubt as to his complicity in the fraud. Mrs Silvertown was painfully conscious of the injury which her acknowledged relationship with the criminal—she had at once accepted the theory that he was guilty, since he had fled from the investigation—would entail upon her and hers. To Daisy the views taken by her aunt and cousin were incomprehensible. She could partly understand Hetty; but she could not understand her aunt.

'If it is true that Gilbert has gone away,' she said with quiet confidence, 'it is not to save himself, but to shield some one else.'

'What nonsense you talk, child!' exclaimed Mrs Silvertown, putting on her gold-mounted pince-nez to examine the girl attentively, as if to discover whether or not the defence was made seriously. 'Gilbert is not a fool, and must have been perfectly aware of what his disappearance at this moment must mean to him. An innocent man never runs away when such a dreadful charge as this is hanging over him. Poor fellow—it is terrible and most incomprehensible. He had such a chance in life as few young men without fortune ever obtain.'

'That is just it, aunt,' persisted Daisy in her low voice, but without lifting her eyes to meet the glittering glasses which were fixed upon her. 'He had the chance, and he was worthy of it. Therefore his conduct is, as you say, incomprehensible, and that is why I think he is innocent.'

'Daisy!—My dear, I said that an innocent man does not run away.' There was a degree of amazement in the tone of the exclamation, and a degree of reproach in the mild reminder of Mrs Silvertown's infallibility, which indicated that she was a lady quite unaccustomed to contradiction anywhere, and certainly not in her own immediate family circle.

Daisy was silenced. As a rule, she submitted without a sign of rebellion to her aunt's verdict; but this time there was a slight flush on the pale cheeks and a compression of the lips suggestive of irritation at the widow's self-sufficiency. Hetty was too well pleased to find that every possible suspicion was cleared away from Henry to pay much heed to the trifling passage between her mother and cousin.

Mrs Silvertown was more astounded by the audacity of her niece than by the assumed guilt of the fugitive, although that was most offensive and, as she fancied, derogatory to her; for she had been his friend and sponsor. She had—when he seemed to be prospering—even admitted that there was a distant family relationship between them; and the remembrance of that admission rankled in her mind now. Instead of experiencing any sense of pity for Gilbert, she was angry with him, for his defalcation was a direct personal injury. She would have been relieved if there had been any way in which she could save her own reputation for perspicacity by hinting that she had always had a misgiving about the young man. But such consolation was denied her. His success had been so rapid; the favourable impression he made upon every one to whom he had been presented so marked, that she had not been able to resist the delight of playing the patron to the favourite of the hour. Thus she had committed herself too definitely as voucher

for his respectability to dare to shirk it now. She could only exclaim that she was horrified—that she had never been so deceived in all her life, and that it almost shattered her faith in the honesty of the whole human race. She had done so much for him—on account of his poor dear mother, who had been mercifully spared by Providence the spectacle of his disgrace—that she could never forgive him, or forget her own weakness in being led so far astray by misplaced confidence.

Her imagination so far exaggerated the benefits she had conferred on the ungrateful creature, that it misled her into the delusion that she had introduced him to Henry Dacon. The fact was that Gilbert had brought his friend to Cedar Cottage, thereby earning the special approbation of the widow, who saw in the nephew of John Ellicott of Overton Park a most desirable match for her dowerless daughter. She had thought of Gilbert as a possibly acceptable suitor; but she repudiated the bare idea of it as soon as Dacon frankly declared his intentions and was accepted by Hetty. She pretended to herself that she had never thought of such an alliance, and was angry with Gilbert for having been so ambitious as to fancy she would ever have sanctioned it.

Mrs Silvertown was a plump, fair, lively lady, still on the hither side of fifty. She had a great deal of vanity, but it was carefully held in hand by a large measure of common-sense. She was good-natured to this extent—she would help anybody, if the help required did not tax her pocket, whilst it rebounded to her credit. She was blessed with unlimited faith in herself, in her own wisdom, foresight, charitableness, and all the other noblest qualities of humanity; and she had admirers enough of both sexes—sincere and sycophantic—to sustain her in the creed which makes life most agreeable.

It was only this faith which enabled her to bear with equanimity the open rebellion of Daisy in regard to Gilbert. As she had forgotten the circumstance that it was he who had brought her into contact with the desirable son-in-law, so she had been long oblivious to the quarterly payment regularly received from the late Mr Forester's executors which defrayed all Daisy's expenses, and was pleased to think of herself as the generous benefactor of the orphan niece. Moreover, but excusably, she ignored the item that the girl was quietly making a way for herself in authorship, which might have permitted her—even without the settled provision made for her—to adopt an independent position.

Such a thought, however, never crossed Daisy's mind. She had grown up under the influence of her aunt, who naturally held the position of a parent to her, and looked upon Cedar Cottage as her only home. She accepted so implicitly the theory that her aunt's protection was a necessity for which the submission of a daughter was due, that she had never dreamed of asserting independence.

The advent of Gilbert Astbury had altered her views of everything. At first, it had brought new light and joy into her life: new strength, new hope inspired her visions of the future. He was poor, she knew; he was clever, she was sure; he was ambitious, she could easily divine. Might not she, somehow, help him to win the goal of

his ambition? Then for the first time she had begun to consider her position. She found out what means were at her disposal; and with the sanguine ideas which the first cheque from a publisher inspires in the budding author, she imagined that with hard work and an average continuance of the success her early efforts promised, she might be able to do wonderful things in helping forward the man she loved. The castles in the air thus built were very beautiful; and the dreams of bliss with which she filled them were very sweet. Then the castles and the dreams were all blown into thin air by one soft breath of the man for whose sake they had been all created.

Gilbert, attracted by her quiet, thoughtful, and gentle nature, had early accepted her as his friend, and he soon made her his confidant. When the rapid success he was making—and she was so proud of!—was confirmed by the statements of his friend Harry Dacon as well as by his own cheerful humour, Gilbert gave her the bit of confidence which for the time turned day into night. He loved Hetty. He worked and lived only for her.

Daisy was silent, stunned by the disastrous mistake she had made, and the utter darkness into which the sudden discovery thrust her. Yet she was not angry with the man who had blinded her. The golden fancies which had made the world so beautiful to her were all gone; and it was the more misery to her to know that he, too, must presently step into the same dark region, unpenetrated by any ray of hope to save him from despair. She shrank from telling him that she knew he must undergo the same pangs he had unconsciously and innocently inflicted upon her. She loved him so much that he was at once exonerated from all blame in her mind; and she felt pity for him as keen as for herself. Hetty had told her that she was engaged to Henry Dacon. Gilbert must find that out for himself. The bitter knowledge would come upon him soon enough, and, judging by her own sensations, he would be glad that she had left him a few days—or, it might be, even a few hours—to revel in the paradise of hope.

He did learn the truth soon; and then had followed much unhappiness for the two men and for Hetty, whilst Daisy looked on with her own sorrow hidden and unsuspected. She tried patiently and tenderly to help the others without one of them guessing that she herself stood in so much need of sympathy.

The discovery of the forgeries in which the names of the accepted and the rejected lover were involved had caused a diversion of the anxieties of the five people most interested in the result of the investigations which had been instituted. But Daisy had not the faintest doubt that whatever the upshot might be, Gilbert would come forth scathless. She had no thought that it would be so soon necessary for her to assert this faith against the commonplace inferences which directed her aunt's judgment of his conduct; and she was considerably surprised that Hetty did not attempt to speak one good word for him. She was satisfied, however, that this silence was not due to callousness, but to Hetty's anxiety for Dacon's appearance. She, too, began to wish for his arrival, so that some more light

might be thrown on the state of affairs. She had no doubt that he would come, from the way in which Hetty listened to the sound of passing wheels and her frequent visits to the window.

CHAPTER III.—FOR HER SAKE.

On leaving Cedar Cottage, Gilbert went straight as the pathways of the pleasant Dulwich meadows permitted to Champion Hill Station and took the first train to the City. A hansom conveyed him to the corner of Fenchurch Street, and he completed his journey on foot. His destination was one of those massive blocks of buildings containing the offices of some of the most extensive London firms. He ascended a broad stone staircase, and on the first floor the broad swinging doors of Ellicott & Co.'s offices faced him. He did not enter by them, but passing down a corridor, halted at a small door on which the word 'Private' was printed in gold letters. A latchkey with which he was provided gained him immediate entrance to a small but high-ceilinged apartment. It was well lighted by a large window, having a double frame of glass to deaden the din of traffic in the street. A rich Turkey carpet and massive oak furniture proclaimed this to be the sanctum of a person of some importance.

At the writing-table was a gentleman of thirty-five or so, who started to his feet on the opening of the door. He was tall, handsome, with trim mutton-chop whiskers, chin and upper lip cleanly shaved, and his head covered with bushy black hair. He wore the orthodox black cloth frock coat, and in every respect had the appearance consonant with his surroundings—that of a man of position and authority in a great commercial house. But when he saw who his visitor was, agitation displaced his dignity.

'I thought it was Mr Ellicott,' he said huskily. 'I am glad you have got back before him.—What is your answer? Have you seen her?' In his eagerness for the desired information, he paid no heed to the whiteness of Gilbert's face or his physical exhaustion, so plainly evinced by the manner in which he grasped the back of a chair for support the moment after putting down his bag and other things.

'Yes,' he answered faintly; 'I have seen her.'

'That was lucky. How did you manage it?—for she told me that nothing would induce her to speak to you again until—— But, good heavens, Astbury, you look as if you were going to faint. Sit down, man. Here is a glass of water.'

Gilbert took the water, but did not sit down. The draught seemed to revive him, for he spoke quietly and with more firmness than at first. 'I suppose the hurry and excitement have upset my nerves a bit. I shall be all right presently. As you say, it was lucky I saw her—lucky for you.'

'Then you have the answer I expected she would give?—What is your decision?' Henry Dacon's lips were parched as he put the question; his eyes seemed to start with terror as he waited for the response. Strongly built man as he was, his whole frame shook with the intensity of his brief suspense. In the momentary pause before Gilbert spoke there was concentrated an age of misery and fear.

'My decision is what I promised it should be if she satisfied me that her happiness absolutely depended on you.'

Dacon sprang forward and grasped Gilbert's hands, looking as if he could scarcely believe his ears. 'Do you really mean this, Astbury?' he queried, joy and doubt contending in his mind. 'Do you think you are strong enough to carry it out to the end?'

'I will try,' was the calm and resolute reply. 'The sacrifice is a terrible one—it seems too great for any man to make for another, however strong the bonds of friendship between them may be.'

'It is for her sake,' was the calm and solemn answer.

'True, true; it is for her sake. Heaven knows I accept it only because it is so. Had there been any other way to spare her—to make her happy, I would have done anything, rather than let you take this burden on your shoulders. There is no way out of it except this, and as you meant to go away at anyrate if she told you that—that!—He became more and more confused, and his face so flushed that a fit of some kind seemed imminent. He did not complete the sentence, but ran on in another groove. 'It is hard for you—cursed hard. Will you not repent when you find yourself an exile, and think of what you know will be said here about you? Will you not, by-and-by, begin to feel that the sacrifice is too great, and seek to undo everything?' He had spoken with nervous rapidity, as if striving to drown in words the promptings of his better nature. His impulse in the first gush of admiring gratitude had been to say: 'No, Astbury: I will not allow you to do this thing even for her sake. I will bear the burden of my own folly—sin—madness—call it crime at once. You, however, shall not suffer for me.' But the weakness which had betrayed him into his present position proved stronger than his nobler instincts. Good and bad were so equally poised in his character, that temptation of any kind always weighed the balance down on the wrong side, although he suffered the acutest pangs of remorse afterwards.

His superficial impulses were always of a generous nature. Warm-hearted and fond of approbation, he delighted in doing a good turn for any one. Thus, when Gilbert first arrived in London, he cheerfully recognised his former schoolmate, and did everything in his power to promote the youth's prospects. But when driven into a corner, Dacon so intensely dreaded being detected in a fault, that he could not help trying to escape from it no matter who might be the scapegoat. He was bitterly sensible of all that Gilbert Astbury must hazard and lose by the course determined upon. He devoutly wished there had been any other way out of the hole into which he had tumbled; but there was none save the one Gilbert offered him. He persuaded himself that if Hetty's future had been as inalienably linked with Astbury's as it was with his own, he, too, could and would have made the same sacrifice for love's sake.

He tried hard to save his uneasy mind with that reflection and with the constant iteration of the argument: 'It is all for her sake. He wishes to make her happy. So do I. She has told him there is only one way of doing it, and he agrees. I, also, must agree.' All the same, he was at the

last moment miserably aware that he was doing a base thing, and was frightened by the idea that when Gilbert had got more time for reflection—more time to comprehend the degradation to which he subjected himself—he would recant and seek to restore his good name.

'I have given you my promise,' said Gilbert with an earnestness that reached the degree of solemnity. 'Keep your promise to me—make her life happy, and I shall not regret what I do this day.'

'If it is in the power of the man she loves to do it, I will,' was the fervent assurance given with full intention and determination to fulfil it.

'Then do not have any fear about me. But should you fail in your promise, I shall see what it may be in my power to do.—Have you written the paper I require?'

'It is here,' answered Dacon, drawing from his pocket a sealed envelope.

Gilbert opened it, and read the letter it contained. There was not the slightest change in his expression as he studied every word and weighed its purport, as if committing the whole to memory.

'Are you not satisfied?' asked Dacon nervously. 'Is it not plain enough?'

'Quite plain, and I am satisfied. This would be enough to convict any man, even if he attempted to deny his handwriting.—There; take it back with the other papers. I wish your mind to be free from any haunting dread of the power this thing would give me over you. I wish you to be free to devote your whole life to her.—Now, are you satisfied?'

Dacon grasped his hand again, and was for a moment unable to speak. 'If I fail to keep my pledge,' he said with bitter emphasis as soon as he had recovered control of his voice, 'I shall deserve the worst fate that can befall a man in this world and the next. I ask no mercy.'

'So be it,' was the comment; and then abruptly: 'Tell me what are the plans you said you would devise for my escape?'

'Everything is ready, and not a bit too soon.' Dacon spoke promptly, for he was glad of any change of theme. Besides, he was intensely relieved by the calmness with which Gilbert appeared to view the present position and the future.

'Has Mr Ellicott sent to Scotland Yard yet?' he queried as Dacon opened the door of a lavatory, on the walls of which hung several coats and hats.

'Not yet; but he has gone to see his lawyer, Ardwick, to tell him he may take action as soon as he thinks fit.'

'Then the police may be at work now?'

'Not before my uncle returns.—Here, put on this overcoat—it is big enough to cover you without taking off your own. In the pockets you will find everything you require in the way of money, and the necessary letters and papers to enable you to act as the owner of the steamer *Hercules*, bound from Bristol to Rio Janeiro with a general cargo. She lies under orders to be ready to get up steam as soon as the owner boards her. You are the owner, and your name is Edward Harrison. The money you have there and the goods on board the vessel will give you a fair start in Brazil; and of course you will

have whatever more you may require from me as soon as means of communication can be arranged.'

'Your plans of escape are marvellously complete.'

'They ought to be, for they were made for myself;' and even at that moment of peril, Dacon could not conceal a gleam of pitiful pride at this acknowledgment of his ingenuity; 'so you can depend upon it they have been made as thoroughly safe as could be. The coat will do—wide enough and long enough to change your whole appearance.'

'We will put it to the test,' said Gilbert quietly. 'But before we part, let this affair be thoroughly understood between us. Accident placed in my hands the proofs that you had involved yourself in extensive speculations; and that to cover your losses you had, without authority, endorsed bills in the name of the firm to the extent of about eighty-four thousand pounds. On making that discovery, my duty was to inform Mr Ellicott. I have not done so, and therefore have made myself in some measure a partner in the—transaction we will call it. You know I am not a partner in it, and had no suspicion of it until a few weeks ago. I told you, and you confessed, because you could not help yourself. I owe you something for your friendly help when I needed help so much. You reminded me of my debt, and told me that your exposure would blight Henrietta Silverton's life, and I now believe it would. Then to save her, so long as you are true to her I shall be as one deal. All this is clear between us two; and now we have only to arrange how I am to get on board the *Hercules*. There is no one,' he added with bitterness, 'I have to regret my death, for death it is. You have many who care for you; and so it is better that I should go than you.'

'Don't speak that way, Astbury, or I shall cave in,' said Dacon, trembling, lest already Gilbert was repenting that he had undertaken the task of shielding him. 'I at anyrate will miss you.—Come, shake hands, old fellow. I shall not forget my promise even for a moment.'

'I hope so, for your sake and for hers.—What about the trains?' The question was asked with an abrupt assumption of devil-may-care to hide the emotion his trembling lips betrayed.

Dacon looked at his watch, and then, to make quite sure of the time, stepped to the window to examine the dial of the church clock opposite. 'By taking a hansom,' he answered, 'you will catch the afternoon train easily. Get on board at once, sail at once, and then'—

He stopped, and there was such a look on his face that Gilbert was roused from the apathy which had taken possession of him.

'What is the matter?'

'My uncle is getting out of a four-wheeler below. Ardwick is following him, and next there is a stranger.—I believe he is a detective. Ardwick has decided that no more time is to be lost.'

'Then your plans are likely to fail at the first step.'

'Not unless you want them to fail,' rejoined Dacon in hurried and excited accents. 'They will go into my uncle's room first, and then send

for me. Here; go into the lavatory. After the clerk has come for me, we will know that the coast is clear, and you can get away by the private door.'

Gilbert submitted to be hustled into the place of concealment. Dacon, with heart palpitating painfully, seated himself. His hands trembled so that he was compelled to press them down firmly on the desk before him in order to keep them steady. He did not attempt to take up a paper, but pretended to be occupied in studying a foolscap sheet on which there was much writing, followed by many figures and red lines suggestive of an exercise in Euclid.

There was a tap at the door communicating with the general office, and, as he had anticipated, a clerk appeared in response to his ready 'Come in.'

'Mr Ellicott desires to see you immediately, sir.'

'I shall be with him in a moment,' answered Dacon, not looking up.—'Has he brought Mr Ardwick and the other gentleman?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Thank you.'

As soon as the door closed, Dacon sprang to the hiding-place of Gilbert and released him. 'Good-bye, Astbury. I am your debtor for life. If you should fail in your escape, trust to me. Good-bye again.'

They clasped hands, and debtor and creditor parted—the one standing trembling on the threshold of discovery, the other passing calmly under the cloud of disgrace.

Gilbert walked quietly and unobserved down the broad staircase, out into the street. He hailed a passing hansom, and was driven to the railway station, where he was to enter the train which would be his funeral car; for he was leaving behind all that a man values in this world—the woman he loved and the certainty of an honourable career. What did it matter how things might turn out for him now? His only prospect of joy was that of learning that Dacon proved true and made a good and faithful husband to Hetty. He carried with him to his exile the consciousness of innocence and the tender satisfaction of knowing he had done all it was in human nature to do to prove how much he loved. By-and-by, perhaps the memory of this would brighten his way.

As for Dacon, he stood for a few moments dazed, like one who has just heard the sentence of death pronounced upon him, and could not yet realise its full import. He would be safe if Astbury made good his escape—safe from all hint of shame or disgrace; safe from the contempt of the woman to whom he was devoted; safe from the scorn of that good, generous uncle, who trusted him, and had done for him all that the most affectionate parent could have done for a son. He would still retain his position in their esteem; still hold up his head in the City as the future chief of the great house of Ellicott & Co., whose wealth and integrity were undoubted. That reflection roused, but could not console him; for there came with it the bitter knowledge that he had this day hung round his neck the heavy chains of eternal fear and remorse.

A clerk came with a second message, and

Dacon tried to pull himself together in order to endure as calmly as he might the ordeal of the forthcoming interview with the head of the firm, the lawyer, and the detective.

THE OLD-TIME PROSPECTOR.

THE Prospector, as he is called, is as necessary in the mining camps as the farmer is in an agricultural country. Indeed, the discovery of mineral wealth, especially gold and silver, in any country is almost invariably due to the professional prospector. In the United States the most expert of these men are very often old '49-ers' from California. But of course such old-timers are becoming scarcer every year, while the army of prospectors is increasing in numbers; because in every newly-discovered camp novices follow the footsteps of the old-timers, and soon gain sufficient knowledge of the different formations to become authorities on the subject.

It is due to the restless and adventurous spirits of these men that 'stampedes' to unexplored regions in the Far West are organised. It is only necessary to hint that in a certain range of mountains gold ought to exist, to start the prospector on a tramp of discovery. In an incredibly short space of time—a few hours at the furthest—he will pack all his worldly possessions together with a supply of provisions on his *burro* or donkey; and with his rifle on his shoulder and revolver in his belt, will start out to walk, leading the *burro*, often a distance of hundreds of miles. His worldly possessions can be easily handled, for usually they only consist of a pair of blankets, pick, shovel, and gold-pan, together with the primitive cooking utensils used in camp. He is at home wherever night overtakes him; he asks no better roof than the heavens, and no softer bed than the earth. Once let a man start to prospect for mineral for a livelihood, and it is very rarely you see him forsake the business for any other. No matter how many new camps he explores, he is always ready and anxious to follow a stampede, even though, as is often the case, it results in failure. An experienced prospector can always command sufficient funds to enable him to follow the dictates of his restless spirit; for capitalist speculators are only too eager to furnish money and provisions in return for a share of the discoveries the prospector may make. This is one of the principal reasons why he seldom becomes a rich man; another is, that he rarely, if ever, saves his money.

Among the chief characteristics of the old-time prospector is his reckless extravagance and generosity. If he makes a rich discovery or 'strike,' he sells out the greater portion of his interest to the highest bidder—usually mining speculators, a class of men who are always watching for investments in rich discoveries which they partially develop, then form stock Companies to prosecute the work they have commenced, and usually realise large returns on their investment. The prospector, as soon as he has made his sale, usually lives in clover as long as the proceeds will allow him. The faro banks, dance-halls, and drinking-saloons reap their harvest; his life, as long as his money lasts, is passed in what he considers one continual round of pleasure; and when he is 'busted,' he

packs his *burro*, shoulders his rifle, and tramps over the hills and mountains once more, in search of another strike.

Throughout the mining regions the visitor will see hundreds of log cabins built by prospectors, and deserted; often you will pass through deserted towns where the log and frame buildings have been left so hurriedly that the shelving and counters still remain in the shops; and the painted signs on the buildings indicate the class of merchandise which had been stored within the walls at some bygone day when the adventurous prospector had made a rich discovery, but one which failed to 'pan out' successfully. One rich strike in a district is often sufficient to cause such a stampede of miners, store-keepers, saloon-keepers, gamblers, and the migratory population to be found in all mining camps, that houses appear to grow like mushrooms. If the strike is developed successfully and other discoveries are made in the vicinity, the town grows very rapidly; but if, on the other hand, it proves a failure, then the town is as rapidly deserted, for the merchants and business men of the mining countries are of the same restless spirit as the prospector, and move almost as rapidly.

What the old-time prospector does not know about practical mining and the tricks and devices adopted to persuade 'tenderfeet' to invest their money, is hardly worth recording. He will point with pride to some hole in the ground which, by salting with gold-dust, he sold to some Eastern capitalist as a discovery of a true fissure vein. He has a profound contempt for the college-educated professors who are often sent by syndicates to examine mining property. He will never acknowledge that men from Eastern cities in the United States are capable of managing a Mining Company successfully. In his eyes, no one but an old-timer from the Pacific slope can ever make a mine pay.

In a word, the old-time prospector is a character. His cabin or camp-fire is an asylum to all travellers; his hospitality is proverbial; no matter how slender his supply of provisions, he is always ready to share them with any wayfarer who comes along, and will consider the offer of remuneration as an insult. His yarns relating to his adventures are always interesting and exciting, if not strictly true. He is never tired of telling of the good days when Alder Gulch in Montana was discovered, and of the dust taken from the 'placer' mines by the early settlers; and is continually deploring the fact that the railroads and civilisation are pushing westward so rapidly; for it is the height of the ambition of your old-time prospector to be as far from a railroad and civilised people as possible.

Among the notable exceptions to the rule that the prospectors rarely become rich or influential men may be mentioned the present United States Senator, George Hearst of California; he is an old '49-er' whose good luck—as they call it in the mines—has never forsaken him; and this, aided by shrewd management, has placed him among the millionaires of America. Although he has become a rich and influential man, yet he will never forget his experiences as a prospector in the days of 1849, when California was first discovered; consequently he has a very soft place in his heart for any brother-prospector who has not been so

prosperous. His love for California is so devout that it approaches idolatry, and I have frequently heard him say that he would rather be governor of that State than President. The old-time prospector never tires of calling his listener's attention to the career of George Hearst or any other successful old-timer, with pride, without the least jealousy; but will invariably finish by telling you where he himself might have been if such and such a discovery had turned out all right.

THE TRUTH ABOUT FOX-HUNTING.

BY ONE WHO HAS GIVEN IT UP.

'My dear fellow, it's most awfully good of you; awfully kind. But I—I make it a rule never to hunt another man's horses—never.' I sit back in my chair as I say this to Pudgewood, whose guest I am, and assume a look which ought to convince him that I am making a sacrifice to principle which causes me profound regret and disappointment; but somehow he doesn't seem to believe it.

'Nonsense, Jones!' he says. 'I'll give you the old gray; he's the quietest hunter I have in the stable. Steady as a house, and as clever on his legs as a cat.—I defy you to bring that horse down, sir!' he concludes, with an emphatic thump on the dinner-table.

Now, strictly between ourselves, it had never occurred to me that there was the least likelihood of my bringing the horse down. Well-founded apprehensions lest it should bring me down prompt my disinclination to accept Pudgewood's offer; but of course it isn't necessary to tell him that. I was speaking the truth when I told him that I made it a rule never to hunt another man's horses; I made that rule long ago, and, never having hitherto met any one who tempted me to break it, have found no difficulty in adhering to it. When I told Mrs Jones to accept the Pudgewoods' invitation to spend a week at their place in Sheshire, I quite forgot that Anthony Pudgewood was one of those few hunting-men who are generous enough to mount their friends. Had I remembered the fact, I should have come to Barnsdale forearmed with a sprained wrist, or something which would effectually prevent a man attempting to ride. It is quite obvious that Pudgewood won't be put off by my plea of 'principle'; so I must try another argument.

'I don't like refusing your offer, Pudgewood,' I say; 'and I should have enjoyed a day with the hounds immensely, but I have brought no riding things with me.' That ought to be conclusive, I think. But no.

Pudgewood casts a critical eye over my figure, and says thoughtfully: 'My clothes wouldn't fit you, I'm afraid.—But, George—you remember my brother George?—left all his hunting kit here, and he is just the same build as you are. I'll lend you some of his things.'

Every loophole of escape seems to be closing up. I cast an appealing look at my wife, who is sitting opposite me. She is a clever woman, Mrs Jones, though I say it; wonderfully ready, and of boundless resource. I give her a glance which is intended to convey 'Help me out of it'; but she fails to grasp my meaning, and helps me a little further into it.

'When Mr Pudgewood is so kind as to offer you a mount, Algernon, I really think you ought to take it,' she says.

'Quite right, Mrs Jones,' assents Pudgewood. 'I shouldn't like your husband to go away from Barnsdale without having a gallop with the Sheshire Hounds. I know how fond of hunting he is; he has often told me of his doings.'

Things are growing worse. I'm afraid I must have given Pudgewood a wrong impression when I talked to him about hunting. My experience of the sport of kings has been that of an onlooker from the seat of a dogcart. I used to enjoy that thoroughly, particularly the lunching part of the day's business, when I was staying up in York-shire last winter. I have sometimes been for a ride along the road; but I never rode to hounds in my life, and ought to have mentioned the fact, which Pudgewood does not appear to be acquainted with. I wish there weren't so many people present; I really have not the courage to explain how I have gained the knowledge of hunting matters which I have been airing so freely all dinner-time before such a crowd. It would look too foolish.

'I'm desperately afraid that it's going to freeze to-night,' says a young gentleman, drawing aside the window-blind as soon as the ladies have left the room; 'it's looking horribly clear.'

The remark is received with a chorus of indignant dissent, in which I join feebly. Everybody has good reason to believe that it won't freeze; the thermometer has been rising, and the barometer has been steady all day. There's a south wind; and Jinks, the first whip, said only yesterday that there wouldn't be frost again for a fortnight. Jinks appears to be an infallible authority on the weather, judging from the manner in which his opinion is quoted and received. Everybody is soothed by the announcement; and we draw in our chairs, directing scornful glances at the upstart who took upon himself to look out of the window, and who now relapses into snubbed silence. I breathe an inward prayer for at least ten degrees of frost, and try not to hate the unknown Jinks. That is my one hope now; if it freezes I am saved; if it doesn't—

I must confess that there is something about hunting-gear which gives the wearer a feeling of confidence; and as I stand before the mirror in my dressing-room this morning, rigged out in George Pudgewood's buckskins and top-boots, which fit me admirably, I begin quite to look forward to the day's outing. It didn't freeze last night; on the contrary, there was a little rain, so the ground will be tolerably soft if I meet with an accident.

'I wish you had a red coat,' says my wife, who has come to inspect me; 'and—I may be wrong—but I think, Algernon, you have put your spurs on upside down.'

Mrs Jones's father was a noted hunting-man in the shires, and she ought to know something about these matters.

'Dear me! so I have. Thanks for noticing it. I'll put them right at once.'

They are soon readjusted under Mrs Jones's directions, and I go down-stairs to the breakfast-room. I had no idea it was so difficult to walk down-stairs with spurs on. Twice the

rowels catch in the carpet, and I only save myself from a bad fall by clinging to the banisters with both hands. Finally, I turn round, and walk down backwards, arriving in safety on the mat without being seen. I wonder how other fellows manage, for I don't recollect ever having heard any one complain of this difficulty before.

'Morning, Jones,' said Pudgewood through a stratum of buttered toast. 'Come along; we haven't much time to spare. The meet's at Holly Copse, seven miles away, at eleven o'clock; and it's near ten now.—Will you ride out, or take a seat in the dogcart?'

If I could take a seat in the cart and keep it, I should select that without hesitation; but a little practice in the saddle will do me good, perhaps, so I say that I will jog out quietly.

Pudgewood nods approvingly. 'Always best to ride to cover, I think,' he says; 'you have time to shake down in your saddle before the day's work.'

I hear the horses being walked up and down on the gravel outside, and the sound rather takes away my appetite. I should like to know a little more about the animal I am to ride before I mount, and therefore seize an early opportunity of asking Pudgewood about it.

'This gray, which you have been good enough to lend me, Pudgewood, have you had him long?'

My host screws up his eyebrows and makes a brief mental calculation. 'I've hunted old Diamond now for nine seasons; he's never given me a single fall, and I never knew him turn his head from anything yet.'

'Haven't you, indeed?' I ask faintly.

'Not once,' affirms Pudgewood solemnly. 'He can take a five-foot wall as easily as you could jump over a straw. He loves jumping, that horse.'

Loves jumping, does he? I listen with sickly interest while Pudgewood continues to dilate upon old Diamond's merits. He appears to be a horse of considerable strength of character, from his master's account; and I fear that if he insists upon indulging in his taste for jumping while I am on his back some difference of opinion is likely to arise between us. I do not 'love jumping.'

Pudgewood is certainly a most thoughtful man. He arms me with a huge hunting-crop, whose horn handle, he says, will be useful to open gates with. It's a troublesome thing to carry, and gets fearfully entwined with the reins; but if it is to serve me as a gate-opener, no earthly power shall induce me to leave it behind.

I am mounted now. I felt a little pale when I came out of the house; but the exertion of climbing into the saddle, with the groom's assistance, has made me purple in the face, for I am a stoutish man of no great stature, and not so active as I used to be.

'E's a trifle fresh, sir,' says the groom as he puts my right foot into the stirrup. 'Don't touch 'im with the spur or ride 'im on the curb, and 'e'll go like a lamb.'

The horse is tossing his head and champing his bits with most unlamblike ferocity; indeed, his whole demeanour warns me to treat his peculiarities with the utmost respect. I screw my armed heels painfully far outwards, to keep the spurs off

his sides, and pick the bridle up very gingerly; I won't pull the curb-rein for any consideration. I try to look comfortable and happy as Pudgewood rides up beside me and gives Diamond a long loving look over from his head to his heels.

'He will carry you splendidly,' he says to me. 'I shall expect to see you in the first flight the whole day.'

It's far more than I expect myself. I am not at all ambitious to be in the first flight—whatever that may be—and don't mean to let Diamond jump so much as a drain if I can help it.

The horse calms down by-and-by; and when we pull up at the cross-roads where the hounds are waiting, I feel much more at home in the saddle than I did when we started. There are at least fifty horsemen standing about, and numbers of carriages full of ladies. Everybody looks so animated and jovial, that I make a spasmodic effort to appear pleasantly at ease. I'm afraid the attempt is rather a failure, for the sight of the hounds has roused Diamond's spirit, and he is very anxious to be off. Presently the whole cavalcade is streaming slowly up a muddy lane behind the hounds; we pass through a gate into a large field; and the master, aided by the huntsman and whips, sends the pack into cover.

Pudgewood trots up to give me a final word of advice: 'Don't touch his mouth once you put him at an obstacle; let him take his own pace, and you are quite safe.'

I nod a despairing affirmative; somebody beside me says, 'They have found,' and I sit in awful suspense awaiting the result. One of the whips appears at the corner of the wood into which the hounds were sent, and holds up his cap. Men throw away their cigars, button up their coats, and press their hats well home. I feel dreadfully limp as we trot towards a white gate in the corner of the field. Suppose it won't open, and that I am called upon to put Diamond at the railings? They are nearly three feet high, and look awfully strong. The gate is not locked, however; and when we get through it, we see the hounds pouring out of the wood, noses down and tails up. 'They've got the line,' says a man near me; 'come on.' He canters away, and in ten seconds more we are all galloping across the pasture after him. My hat gets over my eyes, and I can't see anything; I have lost a stirrup, and in my frantic plunges to recover it, I have spurred Diamond to the top of his speed, in what direction I have not the least idea.

'Hold hard, sir!' bawls a man as I flash past him; but I am oblivious to all things save the certainty of tumbling off if I don't get that stirrup back at once. 'Ware hound!' screams some one else, as a shapeless splash of liver and white, which I subsequently ascertain was a hound, appears below Diamond's hoofs, and howls piteously as we pass over it. I have got all the reins and my whip in one hand, and am holding on to the saddle like grim death with the other. Suddenly the stirrup swings itself back on to my foot again, and with a supreme effort I succeed in pulling the horse up. I don't like to look round. I hear floods of opprobrious language levelled at me, at which I must say I'm a good deal surprised, as I have always been told that the hunting field is the school for manners.

'Perhaps, sir,' says an old gentleman in whom I recognise the person Pudge-wood pointed out to me as the Master of the Hounds, 'if you cannot control your horse, you had better keep well in rear. You have already disabled one of my hounds.' He says this very authoritatively, and canters on without paying the least attention to my apologies. I quite agree with him about keeping in the rear, and shall be perfectly satisfied to stay there if Diamond will consent to the arrangement.

After we have gone a good long way, every one stops galloping, and I come up with the rest of the field. I am stared at a good deal, I don't know why, and I hear something said about a cheque, which I suppose relates to that stupid dog I rode over. It rather damps my ardour, for I have got on surprisingly well up till now; there has been no jumping, for all the gates are open, or there have been friendly gaps in default. I have been abused sometimes for not awaiting my turn at these places; but I can't explain that the anxiety to get on is all on Diamond's part and not on mine. I am glad to stop for a bit; but in a few minutes a man says, 'They've hit off the line,' and we are all thundering down towards a hedge of most forbidding aspect, and without a gap in its whole length. 'Now, then, Jones,' sings out Pudge-wood cheerily; 'sit down, and give the old horse his head.'

The advice is well-meant, but unnecessary; the old horse has got his head, but I have quite lost mine. We are at the hedge; there is a frightful lurch, and I am hoisted into mid-air, vaguely conscious that the saddle on Diamond's back is far away below me. After a wide parabolic aerial flight, I come down lengthways on the horse. Thence I rebound helplessly; and the next thing I am aware of is, that I am sitting in a very wet furrow, with my legs stuck straight out before me, scraping the clay off my face. I don't know where the horse has gone, and I don't want to know. I have had quite enough hunting for one day, and as soon as every one is out of sight, I shall make the best of my way homewards.—I find the road, and set out on my walk to Barnsdale, which must be a good eight miles off. Never mind; it's better than hunting.

Hallo! what's this? I am tramping steadily on, whistling to keep up my spirits, when the sound of hoofs falls on my ear, and sends a cold shiver down my back. It comes nearer and nearer, and my heart beats like a hammer, keeping time with the hoofs. I daren't look round. I *won't* look round. Pooh! after all, perhaps it's only a farmer on his way home. The villainous Diamond is not the only horse in Stoneshire. But even as I try thus to comfort myself and ward off apprehension, the animal comes up beside me, and a gruff voice says: 'Yer be thy horse, Meister.'

It is too much. I throw common-sense and truth to the winds at these appalling words, and repudiate ownership as fiercely as though I had been accused of stealing the creature.

The yokel on Diamond's back stares at me with his mouth open, in stupid amazement, for fully half a minute. Then he takes off a very old hat and scratches his head, as though friction assisted speech. 'But I see'd thee a-tumblin' off 'im in

the field tree mile back. Me an' my mate was harf a hour a-ketchin' of 'im.'

What am I to do? The man knows that the horse *is* mine, or that I was hunting it, and evidently doesn't mean to be balked of his expected tip. One point I am quite decided upon: I will take this countryman into my confidence; I will eat my humble-pie to the very last crumb if need be, but I *won't* ride that fiend miscalled a hunter home. That is a thing I will not do. But I wish I hadn't told the man that the horse wasn't mine. Never mind; it doesn't matter. I will offer him five shillings to take Diamond home for me and say nothing more about it. With this determination I stop and pull some money out of my pocket; the labourer sees it, stops Diamond, and before I can prevent him, has dismounted, and is holding the bridle ready for me to get up again.

'Now, look here, my man,' I begin. 'I want you'—

But the words die upon my lips. Just as I press the two half-crowns into the labourer's willing hand, there is a confused clatter of hoofs, and three men in pink come swinging round the corner. I will wait until they pass. Oh the mistaken kindness I have suffered from, to-day! They don't pass; they pull up with one accord, and hope that I haven't come to grief. I disclaim all need of aid and sympathy with frightful eagerness; but in vain. My hollow tones arouse their pity, and one of them jumps off his horse, and taking Diamond by the head bids the rustic 'help the gentleman mount.' The labourer seizes my left leg in a giant's grip, and I yield myself to fate, silent for very shame. The three officious good Samaritans ride with me just far enough to let the retreating labourer get well out of sight with my five shillings, and then bidding me good-evening, turn up across the open moor, leaving me to my enemy's mercy.

I am bound to admit that he goes more sedately now. How I would thrash him if I only dared! Fortunately for him, I would as soon try to fly as take such a liberty, and he is allowed to plod along as slowly as he chooses. By-and-by he begins to go very awkwardly; he stumbles and trips, until I am in momentary terror of being thrown over his head. He must be lame; and as the awful possibility, nay, fact, bursts upon me, I pull at the bridle till I get him to stand still; and climb down to see what has gone wrong with him. I can't see anything unusual about any of his legs; but there is no disguising the hideous fact that he is dead-lame. I don't waste time in making further investigations; I throw the bridle over my arm, and once more set out to walk home, with the horse limping behind me. I am dog-tired, very hungry, and my body aches from innumerable bruises. I begin, moreover, as I near the house, to feel that my personal appearance is rather depressing. My hat (new a week ago) would make an Irish beggar blush; my once spotless buckskins are boldly variegated with blots and patches of brown and green till they resemble a carelessly drawn map. Diamond and his trappings are no cleaner, and we are indeed a sorry procession as we enter Barnsdale gates at sunset and are received by Pudge-wood at the hall-door.

'Hallo!' he says, 'why did you walk home?'

'He's lame,' I respond in a ghastly whisper. 'Lame!' shouts my host, rushing down the steps and diving at Diamond's legs—'lame!' He feels each limb in turn, and then examines the hoofs, while I stand trembling like a pickpocket's apprentice caught in his first theft. Presently Pudge-wood draws out his pocket-knife and with two taps knocks a stone out of Diamond's forefoot. Then he stands upright and pats the horse's neck. 'Jones,' he says with the gravity of a man whose painful duty it is to bring a serious charge against his best friend—'Jones, I'm afraid you're a duffer.'

And I am too completely crushed to reply.

I have never ridden to hounds since; and when fellows begin to talk hunting at dinner, I am silent. I consider that hunting as an amusement is greatly overrated.

THE SENSE OF HUMAN BROTHERHOOD.

MOST of George Eliot's readers will recollect, and some know by heart, that very pathetic passage in *The Mill on the Floss*, where Maggie Tulliver, resisting Dr Kenn's advice to stay on at St Oggs, replied with great earnestness: 'Oh, I must go.' It seemed, says the writer, that she had told him her life's history in these few words. 'It was one of those moments of implicit revelation which will sometimes happen between people who meet quite transiently, on a mile's journey perhaps, or when resting by the wayside. There is always this possibility of a word or a look from a stranger to keep alive the sense of human brotherhood.' Dr Kenn understood in a moment that deep meaning and intention lay beneath these four words of Maggie's. It is one of the subtlest and most beautiful traits of the mind, this swift and mystical power of interpretation vouchsafed at certain moments of our lives to most of us: a single flash of the eye, or a few earnest words with perchance but little outward meaning, may communicate to a stranger a world of sorrow, a hidden depth of feeling. If it be sorrow that is hidden, then, like murder, it must out. A man may proudly lock up his grief in his inmost self, so that even his nearest friends may not suspect it; but suddenly, at an unguarded moment, as it were, the truth lies bare to a stranger. Often enough a gentle word or look is sufficient.

We English, are we not the proudest, coldest people in the world? For hours together, a dozen people may be congregated in a railway carriage without uttering a word to each other; each, perhaps, is shy of breaking the ice. And probably the higher you mount the social ladder, the further you will find this conventionality carried. Most people have heard the conventional tale of an Oxford student who refused to save a drowning fellow-collegian because he 'had not been introduced.' And yet through all this, human nature is ever thrusting and reasserting itself—bursting through the frail web that society weaves around us.

Strange faces, and even voices, often exercise an undefinable glamour over us. After the lapse of many years, a face occurs to us again and again, seen only for a few brief minutes—perhaps a quarter of an hour—at a little country railway

station: that once our eyes met, never to meet again, and straightway a quick understanding, nay, more, a dumb friendship sprang up between us. We still, at this day, see the face and meet the eyes while the train steams slowly away, and in a few moments is but a black dot in the distance.

Other well-known and oft-seen faces that we strive to recall either elude us, or flash dimly for a second on the mind's eye. As Tennyson so beautifully says:

I cannot see the features right,
When on the gloom I strive to paint
The face I know; the hues are faint,
And mix with hollow masks of night.

A curious thought this—two beings drawn gradually towards each other by countless chances, meet for a brief minute, and part again for eternity.

We see around us daily forms and faces for which we care nothing, whose presence we would often too readily dispense with, while in the obstinacy, as it were, of our natures we persistently regret the one face that we shall not look upon again—in this world, perhaps; and if we did, and were not in turn recognised, would not the disappointment be the keener? Forthwith the idol that we had cherished would fall broken to the ground.

This is an age when science and reason are working to divest us of all but their own unalterable truths, and when many an idea cherished from youth must stand confessed before the light of science as a mere fancy or illusion. Perhaps, then, there are few who will not attribute this undefined influence of strange men and women over us simply to that inherent desire for change and novelty deeply rooted in the nature of mankind. But to some few there may seem to be a deeper reason, namely, the 'sense of human brotherhood,' of which George Eliot speaks: a fact which, if it be true, does high credit to our natures, serving, amongst other ends, to give the lie to the cynic who wrote that men were to each other as wolves.

H O P E.

A SONG.

Oh, chide not Hope, though she deceives
The trusting heart so often;
The music of her whisper leaves
A spell our woes to soften.
She is not false! Her mission rare
Is this, to cheer by smiling;
For nought like Hope can lighten Care,
Whatever her beguiling.

Oh, paint her still the maid we know,
Upon her anchor leaning,
With sunshine on her lips, and brow
Aglow with joyous meaning.
Rebuke her not, lest with a sigh
She leave you in your sorrow,
And dread Despair, still hovering nigh,
Usurp her sway to-morrow.

CAMILLA CROSLAND.

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